The Logger's Bark
RADIO CLUB of TACOMA

December 2012 Volume 8, Issue 10 © 2012 Radio Club of Tacoma

From the Editor

Well colleagues, 'Tis the Season—
We're wrapping up another year of fun-filled activities and fellowship, and looking forward to numerous events in the near and intermediate future. Sunday, December 9th will find us at a TACID facility around noon for the Annual Awards Banquet. And many of us look forward to ringing in the New Year by participating or observing the goings on during Straight Key Night. See the flyer on Page 9 for details on the December 31st event.

Following up on my mention of Rich and Chuck's SOTA event last month, they have compiled a detailed article beginning on Page 10 for our further enlightenment.

For your viewing pleasure, Bob N7QOZ has submitted a couple of interesting QSL cards from his collection. And, from Club Secretary Larrry KD4VOM comes an interesting story about a W7DK QSL card from long ago that just recently was returned to the clubhouse over 50 years after being sent.

Membership renewals are upcoming. Try to take action on renewing your membership at the earliest opportunity, thus saving our membership committee some time and expense in following up. With the rush of Christmastime correspondence, it is easy for me to misplace the dues notice in the pile of paper that accumulates on my desk.

This December issue of The Bark closes out this years volume. It has indeed been my pleasure to have the opportunity to help produce the publication since early in the Spring. It certainly hasn't been a one-man job, and the credits, if any, go to many contributors and mentors. Special thanks to Rich KR7W, Bob K7MXE, Al N7OMS, and Larry KD4VOM for their frequent stories and photos. Gary WG7X has provided valuable mentoring as the previous Barkie editor and as the Club President. And Bob, KE7WPK has been my extra set of eyes, often proofreading the newsletter under a tight deadline. Thanks Bob! And thanks to each and every club member, not only for their contributions to The Bark, but for all that you do for the club and for the sport of Ham Radio..
-73 - W7MWF Mike

In This Month's Issue

Minutes and Meeting Highlights	Page 2
A Blast from the Past	Page 8
Straight Key Night	Page 9
SOTA Adventures	Page 10
WJ1MMY Shopping Guide	Page 13
Wallpaper Collections from Bob	Page 16
The Fine Print	Page 17

7 November Board Meeting Minutes

The 7 November 2012 Radio Club of Tacoma Board meeting was held at the Radio Club of Tacoma. President Gary WG7X called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

President	Gary McAdams WG7X
Vice President	Casey Hicks WY7V
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Treasurer	Bob Purdom AD7LJ
Board Member	Al Ferguson N7OMS
Board Member	Bruce Hanson WE7P
Board Member	James Mendenhall KE6WHN
Board Member	Nick Winter K7MO
Board Member	Glen Galati KA7BOJ

Minutes:

The minutes of the 3 October 2012 Board meeting, as coordinated and corrected, were approved without objection.

HEALTH AND WELFARE: None reported

SECRETARY'S REPORT: KD4VOM reports the following correspondence:

Utility Bills
Bank Statements
Salmon Run Pledges
Electric Radio
Newsletters
Election Ballots
Official Observer Report

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bob AD7LJ presented and circulated the monthly financial report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership:

Larry KD4VOM continues to work with Rick Van Every N7YFE reconciling the membership database and active member roster.

The current membership stands at 295.

Following the November 14th meeting, preparations will begin for the annual membership renewal process.

RCT Information Technology Committee:– Randy Myers WB4SBP

Randy reports that Al N7OMS has delivered the remaining computer systems, network, and periphery gear which has been acquired.

The next step is to prepare the cloning of the existing system on the two new computers.

Applications software awaits determination of whether the donated Office 2007 software license can be successfully installed, and the need to acquire MS Publisher. Plans call for MS Power Point to be installed in the Classroom computer to support presentations.

Randy also noted the need to purchase a presentation controller to support classroom presentations, and the construction of a small computer stand/shelving to support the classroom system.

There was a discussion of the coming need for defining the clubs data management system, to include the data sets required and designated data maintainers. What data does the club need to maintain, its organization and structure and who maintains club data.

Hamfest: Larry KD4VOM

The Bethel facility bill has not yet been received. He still expects a transfer of around $ 1,000.00 to the club treasury. Larry plans to contact the Bethel office next week.

Repeater Committee: Nick K7MO

Reported on the recent club two meter maintenance issue and that his current heavy work schedule which has kept him from progress on the club repeaters, has ended and he expects he will have time to get back to the maintenance and upgrade of the club's repeater systems.

Property Management:

Frank AC7JY sent a message encouraging the Board to promote property donations. The Property Management Team needs gear to

sell at the Mike and Key Hamfest coming up in early March. Surplus equipment is becoming scarce. Frank also indicated he plans to initiate EBay sales.

Elections:

November 14th, the Election Ballots will be counted and the newly elected officers announced.

The Proposed Bylaws ballot will also be conducted.

Training:

Next Technician Class is 10/11 November

Bob AC7LJ reports he is working with Stephen AD7AB on a special Technicians class early next year for a Washington State National Guard volunteer group.

Museum:

Museum holdings inventory project is underway.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Emergency Operations Plan: KD4VOM

Larry Watson KD4VOM reports that workload and other factors have yet again delayed getting the Club's EmComm plan underway...

Salmon Run:

Larry KD4VOM noted that many of the Salmon Run Pledge responses have been received. So far in this year's Salmon Run $1,770.00 has been received, and with the additional pledges should rise to $2, 243.00

Peter has prepared and Larry mailed most of the donation acknowledgment letters. Next will be reminders to those who have pledged but no yet sent their payments.

NEW BUSINESS: Planning Conference:

It was decided to conduct an RCT Planning Conference on 21 November at 6:30 pm at the Clubhouse to:

- Determine whether the Club can/will continue HamFest in 2013
- Review Committee and Functional Manager appointments
- Review Financial operations and 2013 plans
- Review key club operations; Museum, Library, HF Station, Repeater Operations, Property Management, Membership, IT Operations, Facility Management, and Training
- Review key club events planning; Field Day, Picnic, HF Events and contesting, W7DK at the Fair, Salmon Run, Awards Banquet and others.

Discussion Topics:

Awards Banquet: Jim Mendenhall KE6WHN

Jim reports plans for this year's gift cards, and solicited donations of ready to serve turkeys. Bob AD7LJ will handle the Awards Banquet Grand Prize arrangements.

Open House:

Vacancies still exist for next year's Open House Host schedule. A suggestion was made that we expand the Open House Host list to promote more activity and provide a larger cadre to draw from and handle conflicts.

Facilities Needs:

Casey WY7V noted that the chairs in the Kitchen area have no chair rail and are damaging the wall, and that, although the parts are on hand, a hand rail near the ladies toilet has not been installed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Boeing Air Museum:

Glen KA7BOJ noted that a newly created Space program is worth visiting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm

RCT General Meetings

14 November 2012 MINUTES
Annual Meeting

The 14 November Annual Membership meeting was held at the Pierce County Library Administration Building. . President Gary McAdams called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

Officers and board members present:

President	Gary McAdams WG7X
Vice President	Casey Hicks WY7V
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Board	Bruce Hanson WE7P
Board	James Mendenhall KE6WHN
Board	Al Ferguson N7OMS
Board	Glen Galati KA7BOJ

A sign in sheet with the names of members and guests is attached to the original copy of these minutes. There were 39 names on the attendance roster.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Was led by President Gary WG7X

INTRODUCTIONS: Guest and Self introductions were completed...There were several new hams and calls.

ILLNESS OR SILENT KEY: None reported

Correspondence:

Utility bills
Bank Statements
Newsletters
QSL Cards
Election Ballots
Salmon Run Pledges

Treasurer: The Field Day donation pig was circulated

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Salmon Run – There remain a few unpaid pledges. Reminder letters will be mailed soon.

Bylaws Revision:

Bylaws amendment ballots were provided to current eligible voting members.

A quorum being confirmed by the Secretary KD4VOM, the ballots were counted by John Clarke AC7WW and Verna Lilly KF7SCB. Over two thirds of the ballots cast were for the Bylaws revision, and the amended Bylaws were adopted.

Election:

Election Ballots were counted by the Election Committee. The following Officers and Directors were elected for 2013-2014 term

- President: Gary McAdams WG7X
- Treasurer: Bob Purdom AD7LJ
- Board Position 2 Jim Mendenhall KE6WHN
- Board Position 4 Nick Winter K7MO

Training: Last week's Technician Class has been rescheduled to December 8/9 as result of the Clubhouse furnace problem

VE REPORT by John AC7WW

We had eight Candidates at the Tuesday November 13th testing session. Six Volunteer Examiners graded fourteen elements with nine being passed. The Amateur Service has five new Technicians, one candidate passed element two and three to become a General Class and two candidates upgraded to Extra. Jeremiah Rose at age 10 became a Technician after passing element two.

Thanks to the following VE's for their time and effort.

Steve, AD7VL	Jon, AD7AW
Rich, KK7VH	Bob, KE7WPK
Stephen, AD7AB	

A special thanks to Bruce, WE7P to taking the time to warm up the clubhouse for the session.

The next monthly scheduled testing session will be Tuesday December 11, 2012.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Open House 24 November: Attendees were polled to determine interest in holding the Last Saturday Open House and Mini Swapmeet Thanksgiving weekend.

There will be Open House on November 24th.

Doc Spike Inspirational Award: President Gary reminded attendees that the Annual Awards Banquet is coming up and it's time to recognize those who contributed to a successful year.

The F. Clifford "Doc" Spike (W7OS) inspirational award is presented annually to a member who has best represented the true spirit of Amateur Radio, Inspired others to promote and insure current and future success of the Radio Club of Tacoma, and devoted tireless efforts in support of Club Operations

Alan Lentz N7AML is soliciting recommendations for this year's Doc Spike award. Please provide your recommendations along with the rationale for your candidate to Alan at lentz.alan@gmail.com

Awards Banquet:

Jim Mendenhall KE6WHN has arranged this year's annual banquet at The Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities (TACID) facility, on Saturday, 8 December 2012 12:30 - ~ 5pm. See W7DK.Org for address, map and directions.

RCT Planning Meeting:

Wednesday, 21 November 2012 at 6:30 PM at the Clubhouse:

Agenda:

- Review committee and functional manager appointments
- Review financial operations and 2013 plans
- Review club operations – Museum, Library, HF Station, Repeater Operations, Property Management, Membership, IT Operations, Facility Management, Training
- Review and plan for club events next year – Hamfest, Field Day, Picnic, operating events and contests, W7DK at the Fair, Salmon Run, Awards Banquet
- This planning meeting will be hosted by Larry Watson, KD4VOM. Please contact Larry by email - kd4vom @ w7dk.org - if you have any questions or would like to become more involved with club activities.

SSB Phone Sweepstakes:

This weekend is the time to come join the operating fun at the clubhouse. Operate, or learn to operate the Mighty W7DK HF station and maybe even have some snacks… A personal invitation from President Gary WG7X… Great opportunity to learn some contesting skills and learn to use that license you worked so hard to secure…

PROGRAM: Videos -- Building an easy 4:1 Homebrew BALUN; and, Building a Magnetic Loop antenna.

SHOW AND TELL: None Reported

HINTS AND KINKS: Rich KR7W discussed some of the pro's and con's of the Magnetic Loop antennas and described his construction and performance of one he built for 40 meters to work against neighborhood QRM. Rich recommended folks interested in QRP and Magnetic Loop Antennas check out VK3YE's You Tube videos…

TUNING AND TRAFFIC: Several reported hearing the St Paul and St Peter PTOS DX stations on the air, some on 80 meters..

The PT0S DXpedition to St. Peter and St. Paul Rocks (IOTA SA-014), will be on the air from approximately Nov 10 to Nov 22 , 2012. The expedition is a joint venture of Araucaria DX Group and the TX3A Team. For more information check out; http://pt0s.com/

DOOR PRIZES: The surprise bag gift was picked up by Al N7OMS

RAFFLE PRIZE: A pair of VHF power VSWR meters were won by Mike W7XTZ.

The RADIO CLUB OF TACOMA needs your donations…

IF YOU HAVE UNWANTED OR UNNEEDED AMATEUR RADIO

OR RELATED EQUIPMENT.

DONATIONS PLAY A BIG PART IN FUNDING THE OPERATION OF RCT.

PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING IT TO THE CLUB

If you have something to donate please contact
Frank Palmer AC7JY, Property Management Team Leader
or any member of the property management team.

General Meeting Notes
28 November 2012

The 28 November General Membership meeting was held at the Pierce County Library Administration Building. .President Gary McAdams called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Officers and board members present:

President	Gary McAdams WG7X
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Treasurer	Bob Purdom AD7LJ
Board	Bruce Hanson WE7P
Board	James Mendenhall KE6WHN

A sign in sheet with the names of members and guests is attached to the original copy of these minutes. There were 32 names on the attendance roster.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Was led by President Gary WG7X

INTRODUCTIONS: Guest and Self introductions were completed...There were several visiting hams and one new call.

ILLNESS OR SILENT KEY: The Club has received notice of Virgil Pattin K7VP formerly W7AKA becoming a Silent Key on 5 November. Virgil was longtime member of the RCT before moving to California.

Correspondence:
Utility bills
Bank Statements
Newsletters
QSL Cards
QEX
Phone Bill
Salmon Run Pledges

Treasurer: The Field Day donation pig was circulated, the Club financial report can be found on the club website.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Salmon Run – There remain a few unpaid pledges

Mike W7XTZ: Presented a Clean Sweep mug to the President for the Club's successful Salmon Run 39 county clean sweep this year. Members of the operating team at the clubhouse can also purchase their very own – see Mike.

Training: Last week's Technician Class has been rescheduled to December 8/9

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Doc Spike Inspirational Award: President Gary reminded attendees that the Annual Awards Banquet is coming up and it's time to recognize those who contributed to a successful year.

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Awards Banquet:

Jim Mendenhall KE6WHN has arranged this year's annual banquet at The Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities (TACID) facility, on Saturday, 8 December 2012 12:30 - ~ 5pm. See W7DK.Org for address, map and directions.

Jim says bring whatever you like to eat for the potluck, the club will provide refreshments, and turkey.

RCT Hamfest Meeting:

The Club held a 2013 planning meeting last week, and several had recommendations for a possible Hamfest in 2013

The members present were polled to determine if any had an interest in holding a separate meeting to focus on whether the club can field a Hamfest in 2013

There was only one attendee who indicated that they were interested in such a meeting.

Straight Key Night:

New Year's Eve, Starts at 0000 UTC at the Clubhouse…Come to the clubhouse and enjoy one of the Club's traditional events, Straight Key night, participate, observe, or just socialize… and enjoy some snacks and refreshment.

Check out the w7dk.org website for detailed description and information

Washington State Emergency Operations Center Meeting: Bob AD7LJ polled the attendees to determine interest in holding a future club meeting at the Camp Murray State EOC. There was a positive response. Bob will make the necessary arrangements.

Entrance to Camp Murray requires ID, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration documents. Bob will handle the rest.

PROGRAM: Videos –

De-Soldering circuit board components

Installing PL 259 connectors on coaxial cabling

HINTS AND KINKS: Following the PL 259 connector video, several pointed out that using crimped connectors is replacing the old soldered 259 connectors, and seem to be more reliable, and some are weather/water resistant

TUNING AND TRAFFIC:

This weekend is the RTTY contest; all are welcome at the clubhouse to try their hand at this venerable digital mode…

DOOR PRIZES: Two soldering iron prizes were won; Fred AE7CK claimed one, and Jim K7SSS took home another

RAFFLE PRIZE: A VSWR meter was won by Mike W7XTZ.

The Meeting was adjourned at: 8:45 pm

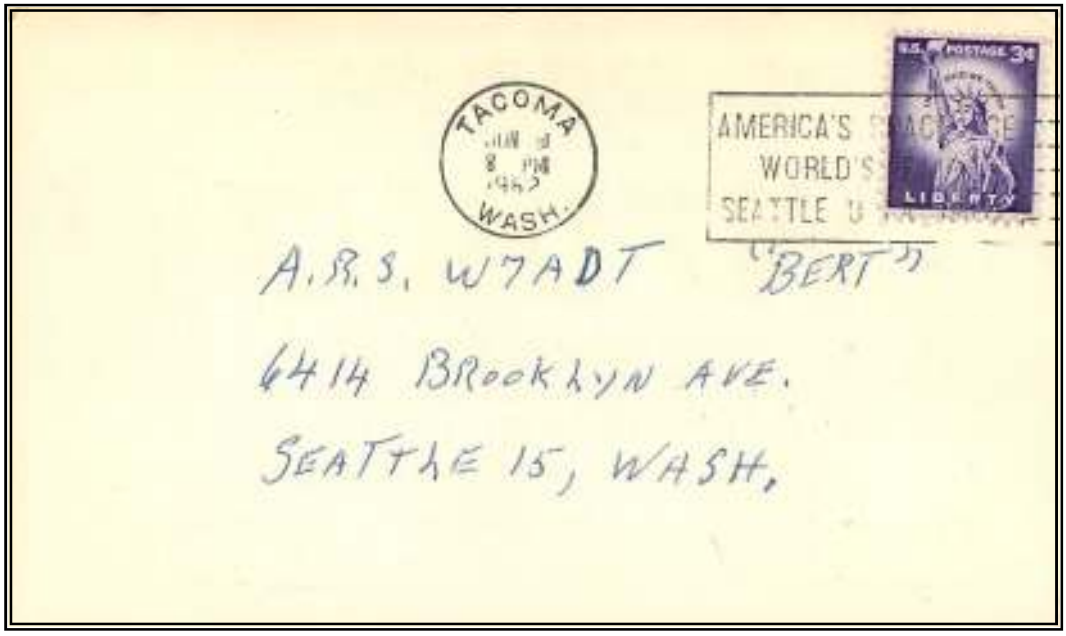
HONDA GENERATOR RECALL

Club member Mike W7XTZ was kind enough to circulate a notification concerning recalls of certain Honda Generators. The defect is potential fuel hose leakage that could lead to fires or burns. I recall seeing several generators of this general type at the 2012 W7DK Field Day.

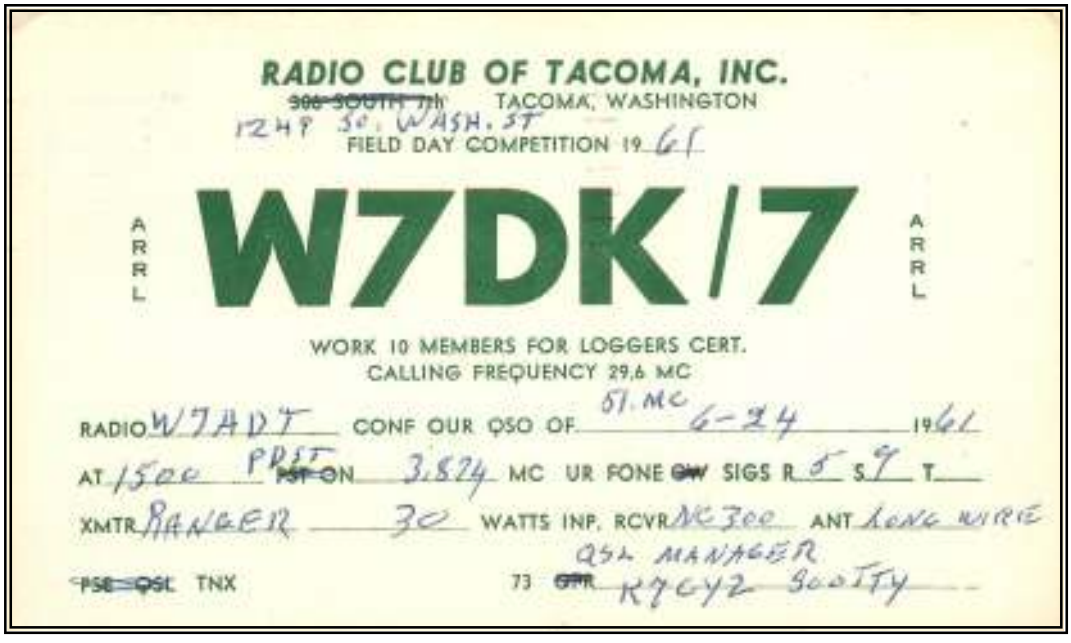
This recall involves Honda gasoline-powered portable generators with model number EU2000i and serial numbers EAAJ-2260273 through EAAJ-2485025. The generators are black and red in color or have a camouflage design. They measure about 20 inches long by 11 ½ inches wide by 16 ½ inches tall. "Honda," "EU converter" and the model number 2000i are printed on the side of the generator. "Companion" is printed on the side of some EU2000i models. The serial number is located on the lower right side, rear corner of the generator.

For more specific information, visit the website of the Consumer Products Safety Commission at http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prhtml13/13042.html

A Blast from the Past



Lo and behold, when our esteemed secretary got the mail a week or two ago, a bit of club history was there in the inbox. An old W7DK/7 QSL card from a 1961 Field Day QSO with a ham in Seattle. Looks like a good signal with the Ranger Transmitter pushing 30 watts to a longwire.


RADIO CLUB OF TACOMA, INC.
~~300 SOUTH 7th~~ TACOMA, WASHINGTON
1249 So. WASH. ST
FIELD DAY COMPETITION 1961
ARRL
W7DK/7
ARRL
WORK 10 MEMBERS FOR LOGGERS CERT.
CALLING FREQUENCY 29.6 MC
RADIO W7ADT CONF OUR QSO OF 51 MC 6-24 1961
AT 1500 PDST ~~PST~~ ON 3.824 MC UR FONE ~~CW~~ SIGS R 5 S 9 T
XMTR RANGER 30 WATTS INP. RCVR NC300 ANT LONG WIRE
~~PSE~~ ~~QSL~~ TNX 73 ~~GBR~~ QSL MANAGER K7CYZ SCOTTY

The W7OS Museum Announces....

The 2013 Straight Key Night Celebration

The Clifford J Doc Spike Museum will host Radio Club Members and their guests for a memorable night of Morse Code contacts using vintage equipment.

Included in the festivites will be a Key and Code Pactice Oscillator judging contest. Bring your favorite Straight Key, Bug, or Cootie, your favorite CPO, or bring both to show off and win a prize for the 'best of the show'.

The party starts at 0001 UTC on Jan 1, 2013... which equates to 4:00 PM on Dec 31, 2012 at the W7OS Museum located at the Radio Club Clubhouse.

But wait! There's more! The Radio Club is providing Pizza and beverages. Also, you are invited to bring a dessert or snacky type foods to share. Yes Virginia, it's true... You DO NOT need to know Morse Code to join the festivities.

Visit www.w7dk.org for directions and other info...

Summits **O**n **T**he **A**ir… Ladd Mtn
Nov 10, 2012 by KR7W

Hi Folks.. Joe mentioned to me that he read about Chuck AC7QN's and my trip to Ladd Mountain in the November 2012 RCT Bark Newsletter 'From the Editor' column. After excessive badgering from Joe I agreed to do this write-up.

Chuck and I were participating in a **S**ummits **O**n **T**he **A**ir, aka SOTA peak activation*. SOTA is somewhat complicated but really fun… like Baseball. Here's the first paragraph cut n pasted from the website: http://www.sota.org.uk/

Google Earth shows Ladd Mtn in relation to other well known places near Alder Lake. The inverted Red Teardrops show other SOTA summits nearby.

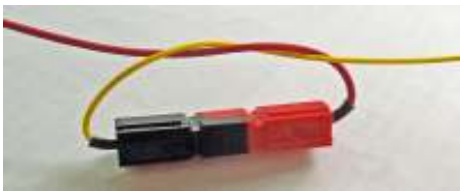
"Summits on the Air (SOTA) is an award scheme for radio amateurs and shortwave listeners that encourages portable operation in mountainous areas. SOTA has been carefully designed to make participation possible for everyone - **this is not just for mountaineers**! There are awards for activators (*those who ascend to the summits) and chasers (who either operate from home, a local hilltop or are even Activators on other summits)".

A presentation on SOTA is scheduled for the Dec 12 RCT Club Meeting. Bruce Prior N7RR, an avid hiker, mountaineer and SOTA participant is coming from Bellingham to encourage us to participate in this exciting and fun part of ham radio. So, readers… mark your calendars for this presentation.

Back to the Ladd Mtn adventure. Chuck and I left Tacoma at 9:00 AM for Elbe then Mineral onto Forest Road 74, which becomes 7409. A couple of trucks were in turnouts along this narrow road. The driver of one truck had his window rolled down like he wanted to chat. "Have you got your orange?" He says. I say, "Yup, we have safety vests". It is Elk Hunting Season. Chuck and I continued along FS7409 for six miles. Chuck would see spent shells along the road… but no beer cans which in my mind meant we would be pretty safe as long we wear our orange.

We left the car at 11:20 AM. The Subaru's weather center said 30 degrees which seemed reasonable for being at 3700 ft ASL. We walked for a 1/2 mile up a hardly used road to a logging skid track leading to the summit at 3957 ft. The summit is very nondescript as the replanted trees have grown up to block any view of afar.

I set up Joe's 20 meter ***Vert dipole for PTP*** (see Aug 2012 Loggers Bark for more info on this antenna) which I had modified to accept a 7 ft extension to both wires for 30 meter opera-



Easy-Peasy Power Pole connection.

tion. The extension wires are connected by power pole connectors. The wires with the power poles are tied in a simple 1/2 square knot and snapped together.

I had posted that KR7W would be operating on 30 meter CW beginning at 2000 UTC (noon) on the www.sotawatch.org webpage which alerts the 'chasers' in their shacks, who is activating which summits and when. As I was setting up my antenna… Chuck had his 2 meter handy talkie and Bunny Hunting Tape Measure Yagi making local contacts on the Radio Club's 147.280 repeater then on 146.520 Simplex. The SOTA rules state that repeater QSOs do not count. During Chuck's 2 meter QSOs, folks at the Radio Club House learned that I was operating CW on 10.115 Mhz. Chuck made 4 2 meter QSOs on 146.520.

I recently sold my trusty Yaesu FT-817 station and bought an Elecraft KX3 which I connected to the antenna. Right at 2000 UTC, I pushed the TUNE button of the built in tuner for fine adjustments. I hear nothing from the little speaker with the volume and RF gain- all knobs to the right. I think something's wrong because the FT817 would at least have circuit noise from the speaker. I call CQ anyway to see what happens. POW! I hear a distorted KU6J from the little speaker. Now, all knobs to the left… 6 QSOs are made on 30 meter CW including one with Randy WB4SPB operating at the W7DK club station.

Harry, N7DOE would tell me "All knobs to the Right Rich"… maybe on a Swan 240, or a Drake L4B but not here. The receiver in this radio is dead quiet. The Blue item is the LiPoly hobby battery. The rubber band holds the regulator circuit board. 16.7 V in => 13.0 V out.

Chuck and I reworked the antenna to remove the 30 meter links to ready if for 20. The 20 meter SOTA CW frequency is 14.061 +/- for QRM. I called CQ and was met with a pile up. After 8 CW QSOs I announced using Morse code that I was QSY to 14.3425, a popular SSB QRP frequency. With the KX3 tuned up, and knobs mostly to the left, I called CQ SOTA. The first voice out of little speaker was ND0C, a very strong signal from Minnesota, who said that he missed me on CW before I QSY'd. At this point I realized that I needed a break, handed the mic to Chuck, and had some lunch.

Chuck calls "CQ Summits On The Air this Alpha Charley Seven Qweeebeck November". Huge pile ups of pouncers return the call. Chuck made QSOs with some of the same hams I made CW QSOs with. These lucky hams get 4 points for KR7W and four more from AC7QN. Some of Chuck's QSOs asked "how much power ya running there for that big signal?" Also, they want to know about the antenna.

After about an hour into our radio adventure… the sky became dark, the temperature seemed to drop, and it began to snow lightly. There was no wind. For a short time we were in a winter wonderland. After more than 90 minutes of hamming it up… it was then time to pack up and hike out. The 1/2 mile walk back to the car showed a dusting of snow on the trees and ground.

This was a fun ham radio adventure for many reasons… it was exciting to be 'pounced' upon like we were a top ten wanted rare DX station on expedition or wanted by chasers afar who want to make the QSOs for the award points. Me… I am not so competitive. I just like getting outside with my radios and DIY antennas.

Be sure to plan on attending Bruce N7RR's SOTA presentation at the Dec 12 club meeting.

-30 de KR7W CL-

Here Chuck AC7QN wearing his *orange* as he makes notes of the pileup contenders in his log. The red item in his left hand is the microphone not a small apple.

Chuck worked SOTA Chasers as far away as NY, AR, and two in NC, all 5-5 to 5-9 copy. Not bad for only 6 watts and a simple vertical dipole antenna.

At locations like this there is no man made noise… so even very weak signals are easy to copy.

See July 2012 Loggers Bark for the 20 meter vertical dipole antenna design. You can build one, too!

Chuck's *orange* really shows up in this foto. The fiberglass fish pole support for the Vertical Dipole is seen and if you look closely you might be able to see the red string that supports the horizontal part of the dipole.

That's not dust on the lens, but the beginning of snow flakes coming down.

The temperature was 32 degrees at the time this foto was taken.

Well Joe… I hope this is satisfactory.

30 KR7W

Dit Dit

—>Here's how it works at Ms and Mr Olsen's house… The kids are grown up and gone, with kids of their own. Me and Ms Olsen have the family over to sit under the tree on that special day to open gifts. Our agreement is to get a nice gift for ourselves, wrap it up and label it "from the Missus or Mr", unwrap it in front of the family, and act surprised. "How'd you know?", "This is super", "Just what I wanted". The grandkids are entertained and their parents roll their eyes at this behavior. But it doesn't matter because it's all in the fun of the gift giving season.

So, for you, Ms and Mr Ham Operator… here's some items to support your hobby to give yourself for the "You shouldn't have - but it's great - How'd you know" season.

Here's the 10 in 1 screwdriver. I've got three of theses and they are indispensible. Two sizes of Phillips, Slotted, Robertson/square, Torx, and a 1/4" and 5/16" nut driver. About $13 from Klein or Ideal Electric at Lowe's or the Ho Ho Ho Depot.

A LED Headlamp. Great for working under your dashboard to run wires to the engine compartment for that new Kenwood D-710 you will be getting from the grandkids. This headlamp is from Stream-Light with 3 brightness levels, a click-stop moveable lamp, and fits fat heads or over a stocking cap. Elcheapo costs $6 and nice costs $30 to $45. Note: Cheap batteries will leak and ruin the inside.

Below is a La Cross WWVB self adjusting clock for hamshack use. This model will allow you to adjust the time zone to +/- Zero, which is GMT time for logging your QSOs, showing up for the contest at the right time, and it simply will look cool in your shack. This model also comes with an outside temperature sensor that beams the degrees F or C to the clock. This is great for chatting on the 75 Meter Dipsy Net where you can confidently report that is, "forty three point six degrees Fahrenheit at exactly five forty six o'clock GMT time". It's quite impressive.

Electrical Crimper for Power Pole or other Automotive connectors. Need to crimp power poles or some spade lugs that connect your SLA battery to your back up rig? These work pretty well and the price is right. $15 to $20… at Powerwerx.com or other power pole sources.

Power Pole connectors… it is smart for all hams to use these on the pigtail power connectors of rigs and all 12 VDC equipment. They allow you to swap power sources within your own shack as well at someone else's shack. Think emergency operation when the big one hits. They average about $1 each in a package of ten. Pay a little more and get the covers that are pre-molded together in the ARES method. Www.powerwerx.com is a good source.

This is the last Power Pole item, I promise… The Uber PP Crimper is the TRIcrimp. The Good: perfectly crimps wires into PP connectors. The Not So Good: it only does PP connectors. I have one and it makes quick high quality work of PPs. About $40. www.powerwerx.com or other PP outlets.

MFJ RFI Detector. This device has a clamp on torroid connector which becomes the core of a RF transformer. Clamp the suspect appliance's power cable or other cable into the torroid and register the EMI energy or RFI generated. It is used to compare one RFI source to another. I use my coffee grinder (which wipes out my HF radio) as a known bad RFI source. Then I compare other electronic devices to it. I found a clock radio RFI generator and my Internet router is poor also. Get some clamp on torroids to quench the RFI and HF operation could be way better for you. This gizmo costs about $80 and is from HRO. A RFI suppression kit can be obtained from Palomar Engineers. See: palomar-engineers.com/.

Does anybody read books anymore? I hope so. If you are not quite to the Extra Class in ham radio yet… Ms Olsen suggests for hams to get the license manual for your next upgrade. Open it up once in a while and give it a read. Some of the info just might make a difference in understanding some concepts in this very complex hobby of ham radio.

If you are a history buff or just want to know a little more about your hobby… '200 Meters and Down' is a good read. Learn about the Spark Gap days and how the military was interfered with from those radio hams. How'd WW1 get in the way? What about the Titanic? How did that form ham radio into what it is today? Save Our Ships… CQD… QST… QSA?… 73… 30…

The Coax Cable Connector Crimper is a general purpose tool for the avid ham radio experimenter. In the Old Days hams attached their connectors to the coax by soldering. I can solder pretty well, but I will admit that my effort in soldering coax connectors is 50 percent success at best. What happens with me is that I apply too much heat to get the braid connection "just right". The center dielectric insulator melts and wire tension shorts out the center conductor to the connector shell. A messy waste of time and solder and an opportunity to get burned as I see it. The crimp method is a high success rate fool proof way to make great connections to your feed line or jumpers. Look at it this way: Professional mobile radio technicians do not solder connectors… so you shouldn't either.

The crimper shown will crimp RG-8/LMR-400, RG-8X, and RG-58 sizes of connectors. A sharp utility knife, a crimper, and some crimp style connectors and you are set up to build some new antennas and jumpers for inside of your shack.

Get a High Sierra Crimp kit with cutters, strippers and a carry case at: www.hamcq.com or www.qsradio.com. Tell them, "Jimmy sent you".

As long as you are installing antennas in your vehicle or building a new dipole for your High Frequency effort… you should have one of these… Enter the Antenna Analyzer. This MFJ model is pretty universal to test out and adjust your antenna for the perfect SWR. It will test antennas on any ham band (except for 220 MHz). It has a tray for internal AA Cells or a Coaxial DC 12 VDC power jack. The model shown here is about 10 years old. Improvements have been made to the new MFJ units such as an accidental proof ON/OFF switch. The MFJ analyzer can be used as a frequency meter and a signal source, accurate enough to get by… but by no means a lab standard.

Ms Olsen wants me to tell you that if you leave your AA cells in the unit for a long period of time… they will leak and make a hard to clean up mess. That's why I use an external battery with a 2.1 MM coax plug. YMWV.

As of late… there are other makes and models of antenna analyzers to choose from. So check out the HRO website, Eham.net for a list of makes and models with reviews, and the back of QST magazine. The Antenna Analyzer is a sort of expensive purchase… so shop carefully to get the one that meets your needs. Every ham that I know who has one does not regret their purchase.

Gift Giving Season… Caveats

By Jim Olsen, WJ1MMY

My previous article regarding gifting yourself something you can use in your ham radio hobby leaves me wanting to tell you to beware or AWARE of some ham radio eye candy items.

Example 1: I knew a ham who bought himself a new Begali Iambic Key and The CW Machine code trainer electronic keyer thinking that this would be the nudge he needed to finally learn Morse Code. He spent about $600 to be motivated to learn CW. Well, you can guess that it didn't work just like the treadmill or the Nordic Trak X-country ski machine that someone you know bought to lose weight and get into shape but then became a convenient place to hang clothes.

Example 2: A technician class ham who is struggling to upgrade to General Class goes out and buys a very nice Yaseu FT-3000 HF transceiver. You can also guess the ending of this story– it didn't work out as a motivator to pass the General test. This ham had to sell it at a heavily discounted price to recover any money.

Jimmy can tell you that most self improvement things, even hitting 'rock bottom' require a lifestyle change… which requires a person to prioritize what's important to them and then rearrange their time and energy resource to make it happen.

It is nice… but is it going to work out for you?

<u>Caveat Emptor</u> comes to mind.

Operator's Wallpaper

If you have any special, or cool, or unique, or simply beautiful QSL cards in your collection that you'd like to share, please scan (high resolution is preferred) and email to the Bark Editor w7dk-news@earthlink.net. If you can't get them scanned, bring them along to the clubhouse on a Saturday and I'll run home and scan them real quick and give them back to you.

In this month's issue of The Logger's Bark we're featuring cards from the collection of RCT Member Bob Crelling N7QOZ. Thanks for sharing them.

I had to use my editorial license and select the W5M Card. Several of our members, including your erstwhile editor are former Jarheads and were well-wished on our 237th birthday last month. Semper Fidelis!

The Radio Club of Tacoma's
Logger's Bark

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Membership Info: FULL (licensed) and ASSOCIATE (non licensed) is $30 per calendar year. $25 for Licensed Seniors (65 and over). Licensed family members at same address pay $15 each for the first two and are free for the third, fourth, and so on. Fulltime students, licensed or non licensed, up to age 25 are $15 per year. Note: fees are applicable for the calendar year: Jan to Dec. Lifetime membership is 20 times the yearly fee you are eligible for.. Lifetime memberships are calculated based on the FULL and ASSOCIATE rates.

Radio Club Repeaters

Central Tacoma: 147.280 + PL=103.5
Crawford Mountain (SE Thurston County): 147.380 + PL=103.5
Central Tacoma: 440.625 + PL=103.5

Remember - For the latest and most current information on events and activities, visit the Radio Club of Tacoma Website w7dk.org. Be sure to enroll as a member to see all the info.

The Loggers Bark
Radio Club of Tacoma
PO Box 11188
Tacoma, WA 98411

To RCT Member:

December 2012 RCT Events

DECEMBER 31, 2012 4:00 PM TIL..?...STRAIGHT KEY NITE-W7OS MUSEUM

CLUB MEETINGS: Second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the Library Administration Building 112th and Waller Road. The club meets at 7:30 PM. Everyone is invited to attend.

Board Meeting: First Wednesday of the month at the RCT clubhouse. All members are welcome to attend .

Bark Deadline: Last week-end of each month. Please submit articles by that time!

Check into the weekly two meter net: Tuesdays at 7:30 PM on the club repeater on 147.280 MHz

Check into the weekly 10 meter net: Sundays at 8:00 PM on 28.375 MHz .